

REMARKS

Claims 10 and 11 are all the claims pending in the application.

I. Drawings

The Examiner still has not indicated that the drawings filed with the application on December 15, 2003 have been accepted. The Examiner is respectfully requested to acknowledge such acceptance in the next PTO communication.

II. Response to Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over the “admitted prior art” (pages 4-5).

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection for the reasons as set forth in the Amendment filed March 27, 2006 and the following additional reasons.

The present specification provides descriptions on page 4, lines 10 to 25 as follows:

(a) In order to improve the throughput of the optical information-recording medium, the drying time is shortened by increasing the environmental temperature for drying the recording layer or the temperature of the substrate itself, rotating the substrate at a higher speed by increasing the concentration of the dye solution, or increasing the air blow speed during the drying (page 4, lines 10 to 16); and

(b) In the method for producing the optical information-recording medium, two or more dye application mechanisms for forming the dye recording layer are installed for one molding machine for molding the substrate. That is, when two or more substrate-molding machines are installed, four or more dye application mechanisms are installed. The dye recording layer is hitherto formed with a plurality of production lines (page 4, lines 18 to 25).

However, the method as described in (a) above involves such a problem that the running cost is expensive (page 4, lines 16 and 17). Further, according to method (b) above, the maintenance cost for the respective equipment is expensive, and the quality control for each of the production lines is complicated, resulting in the large scale of the production equipment, and the enlargement of the installation space (page 4, line 26 to page 5, line 3). Further, when m represents the number of substrate-molding machines and n represents the number of dye application mechanisms, n/m is 2 or more, in contrast with the present invention.

As a result, the cost of the optical information-recording medium to be produced may become undesirably high, and the yield may be disadvantageously lowered (page 5, lines 3 to 6).

On the other hand, the present invention requires a relationship of $n/m < 2$, wherein m represents the number of substrate-molding machines, m being 2 or more, and n represents the number of dye application mechanisms for forming the dye recording layer. With this requirement, the present invention has great advantages for making it possible to solve the problems in the methods described in (a) and (b) above, as well as producing an optical information-recording medium at a lower cost with high yield.

In addition to overcoming the above-mentioned problems in methods (a) and (b), the present invention does not use optimal numbers of machines or mechanisms in view of production efficiency only. That is, as set forth in Applicant's Amendment previously filed on March 15, 2006, Applicant selects the numbers in view of not only the Queueing Theory for improvement in production efficiency, but also processing ability of one dye application mechanism and cooling time for a substrate taken out of the molding machine. This selection of the numbers of the dye application mechanisms and the substrate-molding machines provides drastic improvement in comparison with the description on page 4 of the specification. Specifically, as mentioned above, the present invention makes it possible to (i) solve the problems in method (a) above, (ii) solve the problems in method (b) above, (iii) keep production efficiency even if processing ability of one dye application mechanism is high, and (iv) improve production efficiency while cooling a substrate taken out from a molding machine. Applicant submits that these features of the present invention would not have been obvious to a person skilled in the art in light of the description on page 4 of the specification.

Moreover, the description on page 4, line 22 to page 5, line 6 of the specification is not the prior art itself; rather, it explains the defects in the prior art of "two or more dye application mechanisms for forming the dye recording layer are installed for one molding machine for molding the substrate" as set forth on page 4, lines 19 to 22 of the specification.

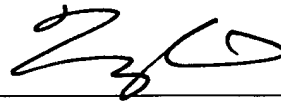
In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that the present claims are not obvious over the alleged "admitted prior art," and thus the rejection should be withdrawn.

III. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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